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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

August 11, 2009

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The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 – The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

I write to you to respectfully disagree with your recent characterization of healthcare town hall participants as “astroturf.”

After participating in a healthcare town hall this week, I can report that public disapproval of H.R. 3200 is anything but artificial or manufactured. My constituents have legitimate concerns, and they are simply voicing them.

My healthcare town hall was originally intended to be a small gathering at a private home. The venue had to be changed three times and ended up in a high school gymnasium. We had over 2000 people attend the event and had to turn away hundreds when the gym filled up.

Far from being an angry mob, the discussion was civil and courteous. While most of the attendants made no attempt to mask their disapproval of H.R. 3200, supporters of the bill had their voices heard as well, with one proponent remarking that the event was a “respectful gathering.” It was hardly “un-American,” as you have called these demonstrations.

When Congress returns to work in September and H.R. 3200 goes to the House floor, I hope that the views of my constituents will not be shut out of the process. I heard a lot of support voiced for the Republican alternatives. These proposals also deserve to be debated.

Sincerely,

JEFF FLAKE  
Member of Congress